

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A system for enabling a user to purchase an item displayed on a display screen of a television receiver, said system comprising:

means adapted to be coupled to said television receiver for receiving television signals representative of a number of items offered for sale and for providing the received television signals to said television receiver so as to enable the item or items offered for sale to be displayed on said display screen; ~~and~~

reading means for reading information from a card and for forwarding the read information to the receiving and providing means;

means for comparing some of the read information to other information which is not obtained from the card; and

means for processing the read information in a predetermined manner and outputting the same for supply to an external destination so as to enable payment for a desired item when the compared read information matches the other information and for not processing the read information in the predetermined manner and outputting the same for supply to the external destination when the compared read information does not match the other information.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 1 ~~2~~, wherein said card includes a magnetic storage area having information stored therein and wherein said reading means reads the stored information from said magnetic storage area.

4. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 1 ~~2~~, wherein said card includes an integrated circuit (IC) chip having information stored therein and wherein said reading means reads the stored information from said IC chip.

5. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 1 ~~2~~, wherein the receiving and providing means includes a set-top box.

6. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 1 ~~2~~, wherein the reading means is coupled to the receiving and providing means by way of a data line and wherein the reading means forwards the read information to said receiving and providing means by way of said data line.

7. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 1 ~~2~~, wherein the reading means includes transmitting means for transmitting the read information in a wireless manner to the receiving and providing means.

8. (Currently Amended) A system for enabling a user to purchase an item displayed on a display screen of a television receiver, said system comprising:

a commerce device coupled to said television receiver adapted to receive television signals representative of a number of items offered for sale and provide the received television signals to said television receiver so as to enable the item or items offered for sale to be displayed on said display screen; ~~and~~

a card reader adapted to read information from a card and forward the read information to the commerce device;

means for comparing some of the read information to other information which is not obtained from the card; and

means for processing the read information in a predetermined manner and outputting the same for supply to an external destination so as to enable payment for a desired item when the compared read information matches the other information and for not processing the read information in the predetermined manner and outputting the same for supply to the external destination when the compared read information does not match the other information.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 8 9, wherein said card includes a magnetic storage area having information stored therein and wherein said card reader reads the stored information from said magnetic storage area.

11. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 8 9, wherein said card includes an integrated circuit (IC) chip having information stored therein and wherein said card reader reads the stored information from said IC chip.

12. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 8 9, wherein the commerce device is a set-top box.

13. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 8 9, wherein the card reader is coupled to the commerce device by way of a data line and wherein the card reader forwards the read information to said commerce device by way of said data line.

14. (Currently Amended) A system as in claim 8 9, wherein the card reader includes a transmitter which transmits the read information in a wireless manner to the commerce device.

15. (Currently Amended) A system for enabling a user to purchase an item displayed on a display screen of a television receiver, said system comprising:

a set-top box having a processor and a back-channel and adapted to receive television signals representative of a number of items offered for sale and provide the received television signals to said television receiver so as to enable the item or items offered for sale to be displayed on said display screen; ~~and~~

a credit card reader adapted to read information from a credit card when said credit card is provided thereto by said user and forward the read information to the set-top box, and

means for comparing some of the read information to other information which is not obtained from the card,

wherein said set-top box (i) processes the information received from said credit card reader in a predetermined manner and outputs the same by way of the back-channel for supply to an external destination so as to enable payment for a desired item when the compared read information matches the other information and (ii) does not process the information received from said credit card reader in the predetermined manner and output the same for supply to the external destination when the compared read information does not match the other information.

16. (Original) A system as in claim 15, wherein said credit card includes a magnetic storage area having information stored therein and wherein said credit card reader reads the stored information from said magnetic storage area.

17. (Original) A system as in claim 15, wherein said credit card includes an integrated circuit (IC) chip having information stored therein and wherein said credit card reader reads the stored information from said IC chip.

18. (Original) A system as in claim 15, wherein the external destination is one of a store, a credit card company, and a manufacturer.

19. (Currently Amended) A method for enabling a user to purchase an item displayed on a display screen of a television receiver, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving television signals at a receiving device representative of a number of items offered for sale and providing the received television signals to a television receiver so as to enable the item or items offered for sale to be displayed on said display screen; ~~and~~

reading information from a card and forwarding the read information to the receiving device;

comparing some of the read information to other information which is not obtained from the card; and

processing the read information in a predetermined manner and outputting the same for supply to an external destination so as to enable payment for a desired item when the compared

read information matches the other information and not processing the read information in the predetermined manner and outputting the same for supply to the external destination when the compared read information does not match the other information.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 19 ~~20~~, wherein said card includes a magnetic storage area having information stored therein and wherein the stored information is read from said magnetic storage area during the reading step.

22. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 19 ~~20~~, wherein said card includes an integrated circuit (IC) chip having information stored therein and wherein the stored information is read from said IC chip during the reading step.

23. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 19 ~~20~~, wherein the receiving device includes a set-top box.

24. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 19 ~~20~~, wherein the read information is forwarded to said receiving device by way of a data line.

25. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 19 ~~20~~, wherein the read information is forwarded in a wireless manner to the receiving device.

26. (Currently Amended) A method for enabling a user to purchase an item displayed on a display screen of a television receiver, said method comprising the steps of:

coupling a set-top box having a processor and a back-channel so as to receive television signals representative of a number of items offered for sale and provide the received television signals to said television receiver so as to enable the item or items offered for sale to be displayed on said display screen; ~~and~~

reading information from a credit card by use of a credit card reader when said credit card is provided thereto by said user and forwarding the read information to the set-top box, and

comparing some of the read information to other information which is not obtained from the card,

wherein said set-top box (i) processes the information received from said credit card reader in a predetermined manner and outputs the same by way of the back-channel for supply to an external destination so as to enable payment for a desired item when the compared read information matches the other information and (ii) does not process the information received from said credit card reader in the predetermined manner and output the same for supply to the external destination when the compared read information does not match the other information.

27. (Original) A method as in claim 26, wherein said credit card includes a magnetic storage area having information stored therein and wherein said credit card reader reads the stored information from said magnetic storage area.

28. (Original) A method as in claim 26, wherein said credit card includes an integrated circuit (IC) chip having information stored therein and wherein said credit card reader reads the stored information from said IC chip.

29. (Original) A method as in claim 26, wherein the external destination is one of a store, a credit card company, and a manufacturer.

30. (New) A system as in claim 1, further comprising a memory means for storing the other information and wherein the some of the read information is information pertaining to the user and wherein the comparing means compares the user information to the stored other information.

31. (New) A system as in claim 8, further comprising a memory means for storing the other information and wherein the some of the read information is information pertaining to the user and wherein the comparing means compares the user information to the stored other information.

32. (New) A system as in claim 15, further comprising a memory means for storing the other information and wherein the some of the read information is information pertaining to the user and wherein the comparing means compares the user information to the stored other information.

33. (New) A method as in claim 19, further comprising the step of storing the other information in a memory means and wherein the some of the read information is information pertaining to the user and wherein the comparing step compares the user information to the stored other information.

34. (New) A method as in claim 26, further comprising the step of storing the other information in a memory means and wherein the some of the read information is information pertaining to the user and wherein the comparing step compares the user information to the stored other information.

35. (New) A system as in claim 1, wherein the some of the read information is the user's telephone number, and wherein the other information is a telephone number currently being used by the user, and wherein the comparing means compares the user's telephone number obtained from the read information to the telephone number currently being used by the user.

36. (New) A system as in claim 8, wherein the some of the read information is the user's telephone number, and wherein the other information is a telephone number currently being used by the user, and wherein the comparing means compares the user's telephone number obtained from the read information to the telephone number currently being used by the user.

37. (New) A system as in claim 15, wherein the some of the read information is the user's telephone number, and wherein the other information is a telephone number currently

being used by the user, and wherein the comparing means compares the user's telephone number obtained from the read information to the telephone number currently being used by the user.

38. (New) A method as in claim 19, wherein the some of the read information is the user's telephone number, and wherein the other information is a telephone number currently being used by the user, and wherein the comparing step compares the user's telephone number obtained from the read information to the telephone number currently being used by the user.

39. (New) A method as in claim 26, wherein the some of the read information is the user's telephone number, and wherein the other information is a telephone number currently being used by the user, and wherein the comparing step compares the user's telephone number obtained from the read information to the telephone number currently being used by the user.